



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HADDONFIELD

Volume 7, No. 2

343 King's Highway East

May, 1964

ILLUSTRATED STORY OF "OLD FAIRMOUNT PARK" AND ITS HISTORIC MANSIONS TO BE TOLD MAY 26

At our next meeting, Mr. William P. Barber, Jr., Curator of Woodford Mansion, will take us on "A Nostalgic Tour of Old Fairmount Park" when he presents his rare collection of slides on the park and its beautifully preserved old mansions—once the homes of some of the most noted figures in colonial and Philadelphia history.

Many of these slides showing the old part, or west part of the park, were made before World War I and were hand colored in the day before color photography was known. They cannot be seen anywhere else.

Included are other photographic rarities such as earliest pictures of Carpenters' Hall.

Mr. Barber has lived in Fairmount Park for 24 years. He was Curator of Sweetbriar for 16 years. He has been in the vanguard of that small group of Philadelphia citizens who realized the historic and architectural value of the fine old mansions and their restoration has been Mr. Barber's passionate endeavor for almost a quarter of a century. Today he is one of the leading lecturers in the country on the subject.

Mr. Barber doffs his hat to the ladies who, in 1876, undertook the difficult

NEXT MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, May 26

TIME: 8 P. M.

PLACE: Garagatorium,
Greenfield Hall

task of arousing interest and raising monies to preserve these great houses and the park around them. According to Mr. Barber, the movement started with a "Committee of 26," a group of women who wanted to create an exhibit at the Sesqui-Centennial which would be "worthy of women." Their choice was the reproduction of two complete blocks of houses on old High Street, now Market Street.

The exhibit met with such enthusiasm they were encouraged to carry out their ideas of preserving historic homes remaining in Philadelphia. Fairmount Park was their first project.

Woodford is one of the noblest of the restored Colonial mansions. It has been richly enhanced by the magnificent Naomi Wood Collection of complete Colonial household furnishings, the gift

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SCIENTISTS AND PATRIOTS: EARLY NEW JERSEY MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

EXCERPTS FROM A TALK BY WHITFIELD J. BELL, JR., AT
THE FEBRUARY MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Ed. note: Dr. Bell's talk at the last meeting was received with such pleasure and enthusiasm, many members suggested that highlights of the talk be included in this Bulletin as a permanent reference source. Because of its length we will print the second part in the next Bulletin.)

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Eastern Pennsylvania and West Jersey share, as they have long shared, many things, including people; for the Delaware River has been not only a boundary but a bond. Rivers are not only obstacles to be crossed, but highways to travel upon; and those who live on opposite banks are linked in subtle ways that overcome the physical separation.

The Swedes settled on both sides of the river, building forts and trading posts at Nya Elfsborg as well as Christina and Tinicum; in the 18th century Lutheran ministers from Sweden preached to congregations on both sides; and Swedish travelers like Peter Kalm, though they might disembark at Philadelphia because it was the principal Delaware port, hurried at once to Swedesboro to consult their learned countrymen there.

What was true of the Swedes was no less true of the English Quakers. William Penn and his co-religionists had their first experience with colonial settlement and administration not in Pennsylvania but in West Jersey; and the first Quaker capital and seat of the Friends yearly Meeting was not at Philadelphia but at Burlington.

The economic ties were close. The tables of Philadelphians were supplied from the Jersey Market, which ran for years in High Street east of Second; and in their turn the Philadelphia merchants provided domestic and foreign produce which Jerseymen needed. A Philadelphia printer had the contract for print-

ing New Jersey's paper currency in the 1720's; and in Burlington his journeyman, Benjamin Franklin, made the acquaintance of "many principal People of the Province," who became his friends and helped him get on the world.

Many Quaker families had members on both shores — the young man who courted and married Hannah Logan of Stenton in Philadelphia county was John Smith of Burlington. Members of the Cadwalader family—Thomas, Lambert, and John—belonged equally to New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Dr. Thomas, for example, had the distinction of having been a founder of both the Philadelphia and Trenton library companies. As John F. Watson put it in his *Annals of Philadelphia*, in the Olden Time, "The vicinity of Philadelphia to New Jersey has had the effect to contribute a great deal of Jersey population to the city, and a good race of citizens they make." Two such, both men of Haddonfield birth, both later members of the American Philosophical Society, were Timothy Matlack, the Revolutionary officer and official and Matthias Aspden, a wealthy merchant.

The American Philosophical Society was the center of many of the cultural ties linking New Jersey and Philadelphia. Before 1800 some 30 citizens of New Jersey had been elected.

Benjamin Franklin first proposed an American Philosophical—i. e., an American *scientific*, for that is what "philosophy" meant in the 18th century—Society in 1743. Among the subjects of interest Franklin mentioned were newly discovered plants, new methods of curing and preventing diseases, newly discovered fossils, minerals; new discover-

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NEW FEATURES PLANNED FOR FLEA MARKET, JUNE 11

Plans and preparations for this year's Flea Market are in high gear now. With the successful experience of last year's Flea Market and some new ideas, the program this year will be exciting and varied.

There will be an auction and Clothes-line Art Exhibit with the new feature (by popular request) of Luncheon served between 12 noon and 2 P. M. Both sandwiches and luncheon platters will be available and the Lunch Committee is planning to convert the patio behind Greenfield Hall into a comfortable and colorful outdoor dining area.

Flea Market Chairman is Mrs. Earl B. Holl and her Co-Chairman, Mrs. William W. Reynolds. This project of the Woman's Committee of the Society promises to be another money-raising success as well as one of the most interesting events of the Society's calendar.

Mrs. Martha K. Goettelmann, president, urges members to come and bring their friends. "There will be something of interest for everyone," she said, "from useful thrift items to antiques, from books and art to Haddonfield mementoes."

The date is Thursday, June 11; rain date, June 12—at Greenfield Hall.

HADDONFIELD BOOK HAS WIDE AUDIENCE, COMMITTEE REPORTS

This is Haddonfield has not only a wide audience of individual readers throughout the United States, but colleges, public libraries and privately endowed organizations have also requested a copy of our book.

Books have been sent to such colleges as Columbia, Duke, Harvard, Haverford, Cornell, Fairleigh-Dickinson, Rutgers and Swarthmore; to the New York

Public Library, Philadelphia Free Library, the Los Angeles Public Library, and to Winterthur, New Jersey Bell Telephone News, Quaker Records of Indiana, State Historical Society of Madison, Wisconsin, and to many other noted public foundations throughout the United States.

A copy of *This Is Haddonfield* still costs \$7.50. You may buy an additional copy for your own use, for the school, college, or library of your choice, for the graduate on your list—at the Society's headquarters or at the Haddonfield Public Library. If you wish, send your check for \$7.50, drawn to the order of History Book Committee, to the Society. A book, ready for mailing, will be sent directed to you or to the person or place you name.

SOCIETY SEEKS ACQUISITIONS WITH HADDONFIELD HISTORY

The Society earnestly requests any persons who may have items closely associated with the town of Haddonfield to allow the Society an opportunity to acquire them, either by gift, or purchase if necessary.

From time to time there have been objects sold by their owners to out-of-town buyers, objects which would have been invaluable to the Society's collection. While limited in funds, the Society might be able to raise the money to make the purchase as was the case with the little Hip Roof House.

Mrs. Martha K. Goettelmann, president, points to the rapid growth of the Society and the active participation of its members as a justification for feeling optimistic about obtaining these valuable pieces. "We hope anyone who wants to sell such items will give us first opportunity to obtain them so that they can remain in the town in which they have their history," she stated.

Historical Society of Haddonfield

Haddonfield, New Jersey

Non-Profit Organization

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THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HADDONFIELD

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The President's Corner

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to everyone who has helped with the many phases of the operation of "Greenfield Hall." This cooperation of willing workers has accomplished a great deal for our Society.

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The commemorative ash trays have been reordered and are now on hand, along with the 250th Anniversary Plates. They are available at Greenfield Hall.

* * *

Our new chairman of Exhibits is Mrs. Raymond Armstrong.

* * *

Our Library is now staffed with competent assistants and may be visited Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, 2 to 4:30 P. M.

* * *

Haddonfield's Tercentenary Event will be a musical play in three acts entitled "*The King's Road*" by Harry T. Kaufmann, an account of the happenings at the Indian King, Newton Township, between October 1777 and June 1778. It is being produced by the Haddonfield Tercentenary Committee and the Haddonfield Plays and Players, and presented in observance of New Jersey's 300th Anniversary. It will be held in the High School November 11, to 14, 1964.

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of a lifetime of collecting often called "one of the most important assemblages of its kind in America."

The effect is as though the whole had remained untouched from the moment when Benjamin Franklin — a frequent visitor at Woodford—last walked from the mansion.

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ies and improvements in mathematics, chemistry, labor-saving machinery, the breeding of livestock, planting and harvesting and "all philosophical experiments that let light into the nature of things, tend to increase the power of man over matter, and multiply the conveniences or pleasures of life."

Among the first corresponding members of the Society were four Jersey men: the chief justice of the province, Robert Hunter Morris; Archibald Home, a member of the Council; John Coxe, also a member of the Council; and David Martin, sheriff of Hunterdon County.

None of the four Jersey men had much, if any, opportunity to contribute to it. The Society was premature; it languished and soon died; and 25 years passed before it was revived.

The contributions of Jersey men who played a leading part in the revival of the Society in 1769 will be described in the next Bulletin.

A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF GREENFIELD HALL

By ALBERT T. BAUER

The tract of land on which Greenfield Hall stands is the remaining portion of an estate that was given to John Gill I by John Haddon, his uncle, in 1714 for his conscientious service to him and his daughter, Elizabeth. It originally was 260 acres which John Haddon bought of Thomas Willis in 1698.

The present Greenfield Hall is the third Gill house to be erected on this tract. The first was a crude cabin located some 500 yards to the rear, near the big walnut tree. The only reference that I can find concerning this building is in John Clement's book where he states "the house was a small hipped roof frame building that stood on the north side of the stream that falls into the mill pond—a house many years since torn down. It was surrounded by locust trees, some of which yet stand and mark the spot where his dwelling was situated." As late as 1897 there was a cellar and well depression still to be seen. It is believed that this house was built prior to 1714 because it is known that John Gill I was in occupancy of the land at the time of his grant. The site is located on the front crest of the back hill just before going down into the ravine. In recent years several foundation bricks have been discovered in this area about two feet below the surface of the ground. When it was destroyed is not known.

It was John Gill's son who built the next house on the property. His name was also John. This second John Gill was given the tract as a gift from his father in 1747 and it is believed that shortly thereafter he built his home. It stood on the same foundation that the present house stands. Little is known about it and no picture or description exists. The "little room" and the servants quarters above in the present Greenfield Hall are from the original John Gill II house. This can be seen by the difference in the window mouldings and hardware in these rooms. More than two hundred years of wear can also be seen on the three stair treads going down into the "little room".

On the death of John Gill II in 1796 the house was then passed to his son, John Gill III, who then resided in the King's Highway Home until his death in 1838, from whence it passed to his son, John Gill IV. It should be mentioned that at this time John Gill IV was a widower, his wife, Sarah Hopkins, having died in 1836. At the time of his inheritance, John Gill IV had decided to take himself another wife. He further felt that the John Gill II house should be torn down and a more gracious and spacious home be provided as a wedding present for his intended bride, Elizabeth French of Moorestown. On April 15, 1841, John Gill IV had his workmen start building his new home. It was completed on October 15, 1841, and on October 21, 1841, he married Elizabeth French.

The next owner was Rebecca Morgan Gill Willits. She was the daughter of John Gill IV and second wife of Samuel Willits. She lived with her husband in Greenfield Hall from approximately 1885 until her death in 1904 when it passed to her son, John Gill Willits. Mr. John Gill Willits, like his ancestors, was a fine and upright Christian gentleman, but his one shortcoming, unlike his ancestors, was that he had no head for business. In a few short years he found himself in financial straits. To remedy this problem, John Gill Willits and his wife converted Greenfield Hall into a combination nursing and old folks home.

On the death of John Gill Willits, his widow moved to a smaller house on Grove Street and put Greenfield Hall up for sale. This was the first time that this estate was to leave the Gill family. It so happened that a Colonel Brodie, who was then Governor of the Territory of Arizona, passed along King's Highway with his wife. They spied the property and fell in love with it. Soon Colonel Brodie had arranged for its purchase and came to Haddonfield prepared to live the rest of his life in the joy of the old house. He also bought some of the old Gill property in the rear which had been sold many years before. However, after two years Colonel Brodie died and the property was sold by his widow to a man by the name of W. P. Hallinger who was responsible for bestowing the name of "The Boxwoods" on Greenfield Hall.

From Mr. Hallinger the property was sold to Mr. Ralph Van Hart who lived there until the great depression, when it was sold at Sheriff's Auction for payment of back taxes. This occurred in the summer of 1930. The successful bidder was Mrs. J. Fithian Tatem who lived on the adjoining property. In 1931 Mr. and Mrs. Harry A. Bauer purchased the house from Mrs. Tatem, her mother. Mr. Bauer and his family resided at Greenfield Hall until 1960.

NEW ACQUISITIONS RECEIVED BY THE SOCIETY, JANUARY TO APRIL 1964

Following is a list of gifts to the Haddonfield Historical Society since January 1964.

Historical papers on Haddonfield, given by Miss Mary Helen Jones.

"History of Early Settlement and Progress of Cumberland County, N. J." Published 1869, given by Mr. Lee P. Hynes.

"Anthony Nelsen—17th Century Pennsylvania and New Jersey and some of His Descendants" given by Mr. Elmer G. Van Name.

A 100 year old linen table cover, given by Mrs. James Ward.

Pewter tea set, two New Jersey flip glasses, two early Jersey jelly moulds, pewter funnel, lable, tureen and tray, old spice box, pieces of old china, sewing bird and various fans given by Mrs. Benjamin T. Wood.

Firemarker (1873) given by J. A. Lutz & Son of Camden.

Old papiermache tray given by Frances Wolfe Carey.

Pitcher, sauce dish (flowing blue), English red ware teapot, a memorial spoon, old dishes, given by Mrs. William W. Reynolds.

Wedding dress, capes and overblouse, Courier-Post Special Editions covering opening of Delaware River Bridge in 1926 given by Dr. Hugo Muller and Miss Annette McComb.

Collection of 80 dressed dolls, given by Mrs. Arthur B. Christopher of Audubon.

The Woman's Committee purchased two small crystal bottles marked "Willard Telephone Drug Store" from Willard's Shop in Haddonfield, which have also been added to the Historical Society Collection.

On loan, through the kindness of Mr. C. Wilder Marsh are two paintings. One, an oil painting of Charlotte Johnson, a cousin of Mr. Marsh's mother (Millis, Mass.) Artist unknown, painted probably in 1868, has been hung in the Chippendale Room; and second, a primitive portrait in oil by Erastus S. Field, has been hung in the Keeping Room. This was painted probably in 1835 and the subject is Mr. Marsh's great-great-grandmother. She was the daughter of the innkeeper of the Swan Tavern, Boston. The SWAN was headquarters of British Major Pitcairn at the beginning of the Revolutionary War.

Handmade wooden French Doll over 100 years old and four small dolls, gift of Mrs. L. T. Reinicker.

Dear Member:

Now that both Greenfield Hall and the Hip Roof House are entirely debt-free, we would like to—and in fact are trying to—develop a program sufficiently broad and varied to appeal to all members of our community.

Some of the projects that come to mind are: Having hostesses to conduct groups and individuals through our building; preparing special exhibits using material from our unique collections; preparing pamphlets and brochures; working in the Library and making available the wealth of documents there. As we delve into one area, other plans suggest themselves. There is no dearth of ideas, but we can't always find people to give these ideas shape and substance.

We feel sure that there are many members who would like more actively to participate in our programs, but we don't always know who you are and what fields your interest is centered. If you would care to join us in some of our present and future undertakings, would you please fill in the form below and mail it to me.

Thank you very much for your interest, and I hope we may have the pleasure of calling on you sometime soon.

Sincerely yours,

PATRICIA W. LENNON (MRS. JAMES J.)
Education Chairman

To: Mrs. James J. Lennon, Education Chairman
The Historical Society of Haddonfield
343 King's Highway East
Haddonfield, New Jersey

I should like to help with Society programs. The day most convenient for me is

..... morning or afternoon.....

The areas in which I have most interest are:

Hostess Library work Publicity.....

Gardening..... Hospitality..... Flea Market.....

Making Posters Lettering.....

Preparing special exhibits..... Research for books and pamphlets.....

Brochure or pamphlet writing Typing and clerical duties.....

Property maintenance..... Celebration float.....

Furniture repair and restoration..... Baking for special occasions.....

General housekeeping incidentals.....

Other Interests

Name.....

Address.....